

Missionary Education in a Presiding Elder's District.

BY REV. ED F. COOK,

Presiding Elder Thomasville District, South Georgia Conference.

Nothing demonstrates like a demonstration; so we will not present theories to be tried and proven, but a plan that has been worked, with results that verify its practicability and efficiency. Our plan for four years has been as follows:

1. The Annual Missionary Institute held early in January. Present and taking part are all the pastors, the district stewards, and picked young people from the Epworth League and Sunday school. Lines of mission study are carefully planned. Best methods of developing the missionary spirit thoroughly discussed. Leaders well prepared. All relying upon the Holy Spirit for direction. Object of this Institute is the training and inspiration of pastors and other leaders. The four meetings held have proven veritable Pentecosts.

2. Fifth Sunday Missionary Institutes held in the circuits and missions. At the Preachers' Institute a campaign committee is appointed to arrange for this series of Institutes and appoint leaders. The plan is to hold a three days' meeting—viz., Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Five in the district each fifth Sunday. Three preachers are appointed to take charge of each Institute. Programmes are printed and the

meeting widely advertised in the charge and adjoining circuits. Features of the meetings are: Strong programme, great crowds, lunch on the grounds, three services a day. Object of this meeting is education in missions. This effort has proven wonderfully helpful to the country people.

3. Station Institutes held by the pastors in charge of the towns and cities. In these the Conference Missionary Secretary and other leaders in missionary thought have been used with fine effect. These meetings usually run a week, including two Sundays. As a result of this method there has been wonderful advance in missionary faith and obedience.

4. Summer Lecture Campaign by the presiding elder, using stereopticon and splendid collection of slides illustrating manners and customs of the people in the fields where our Church is at work, and showing the religious need of the people and the work of the Church in giving them the gospel. To operate the instrument and represent *Go Forward* and other missionary literature, a trained young man was employed. The stereopticon as an aid to missionary education is most effective and far-reaching.

5. Other features of our plan were: (1) Special attention to the organization of Mission Study Classes in the Epworth League. (2) Special effort to organize every Sunday school into a missionary society, emphasizing interesting and instructive programmes rather than the collection. (3) Encouragement in every way possible to the Woman's Home Mission and Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies and their

study courses and educational methods. (4) Circulation of *Go Forward* and the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, with large free distribution of the special missionary editions of the latter. (5) Agreement upon early dates for the payment of missionary collections, and every man sticking to the agreement. Time: March 1 for home missions; June 1 for foreign missions. Other collections early in the fall. (6) Preachers leading. The pastors in the district are not only studying to be leaders of missionary thought, but are examples of missionary obedience. At an early Institute they pledged half a tithe of their salaries for the support of a missionary. An assignment was promptly made by the Mission Board, and the joyful liberality of the preachers holds the Church in the district to the cheerful support of six other missionaries.

Be it understood that in the execution of this closely wrought plan of missionary education none of the other spiritual or general interests of the Church have been neglected. On the contrary, a study of the Annual Conference Minutes will show every line of Church interest in the district advanced during this period of mission study and activity. We do not contend that our missionary campaign is responsible for every improvement and all developments, but we do claim that it has greatly broadened the sympathies of our people, wonderfully quickened their faith, and developed them remarkably in the grace of liberality, thus preparing them for responsiveness and action in other lines of advance.

The plan outlined above has been in opera-

tion in the district for four years, and each year every charge in the district paid every assessment in full or over, the last two years every Church in every charge paying in full or over every assessment. For the four years the district averaged nearly four hundred per cent on assessment for foreign missions.

It is interesting to note increase year by year:

Increase 1903 over 1902.—For foreign missions, \$1,148; for ministerial support, \$1,001; in additions to the Church, 163.

Increase 1904 over 1903.—For foreign missions, \$78; for ministerial support, \$525.03; in additions to the Church, 80.

Increase 1905 over 1904.—For foreign missions, \$2,166.59; for ministerial support, \$1,

Increase 1906 over 1905.—For foreign mis-
205.66; in additions to the Church, 86.

sions, \$1,415.41; for ministerial support, \$1,
992.42; in additions to the Church, 89.

*Increase for the Quadrennium Ending in
1906 over That Ending in 1902.*—In amount
raised for foreign missions, \$10,408; in amount
paid for support of ministry, \$18,659. Raised
for foreign missions during the four years,
\$17,382.59; added to the Church during the
four years, 4,021—net increase, 1,330.

Is there not a real connection between the growth of the missionary spirit and this remarkable increase in the collections and in the ingathering of members from year to year?